

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-05

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DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SAJ-01

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R 291144Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8760

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC HONOLULU

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 18804

CINCPAC FOR POLAND

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PGOV, TH,CH

SUBJ: ASSEMBLY PASSES ON CHINA TRADE BILL

REF: BANGKOK 17644 (NOTAL); BANGKOK A-104 (NOTAL);

FBIS DZ90235Z NOV 74 (NOTAL)

1. THE STATE OPERATED TRADING BILL CAME TO THE FLOOR OF THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (NLA) NOVEMBER 28 FOR ITS SECOND AND THIRD READINGS. THE FINAL VOTE OF 111 TO 5 WHICH PASSED THE LAW CAMOUFLAGED DEEPER DIVISION WITHIN THE ASSEMBLY. THANAT KHOMAN, ADVISOR TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WAS ONE OF THE MAIN OPPONENTS OF THE LEGISLATION. IN ONE PARTICULAR MANEUVER HE ATTEMPTED TO
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GET THE LEGISLATION WITH AN AMENDMENT TO STRIKE THE

BILL'S REQUIREMENT THAT THAILAND ESTABLISH A STATE TRADING CORPORATION WITHIN 180 DAYS OF ITS PASSAGE. HE ARGUED THAT THE CORPORATION WOULD BE INEFFECTIVE AND THAT SUCH A SCHEDULE WOULD TIE THE HANDS OF THE FUTURE ELECTED GOVERNMENT. THANAT LOST IN A 53 TO 22 VOTE. DURING THE AFTERNOON SESSION, BUNCHANA ATTHAKON, RENU SUWANNASIT, AND PRIDI KASEMSAP, ALL OF WHOM SUPPORTED THE BILL, OFFERED AN AMENDMENT REQUIRING THAT PRESENT TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH COUNTRIES CONDUCTING TRADE THROUGH STATE TRADING CORPORATIONS MUST EXPIRE AS OF 31 DECEMBER 1975. THE ASSEMBLY ADOPTED THIS AMENDMENT BY A VOTE OF 56 TO 25.

2. COMMENT: THE ADOPTION OF THE STATE OPERATED TRADING BILL SHOULD MEACXTHE IMMINENT PASSAGE, PERHAPS BY DECEMBER 6, OF LEGISLATION TO REPEAL THE 1959 REGULATION, REVOLUTIONARY PARTY DECREE 53, WHICH BANS TRADE WITH THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF CHINA. THE BILL, HOWEVER, DOES NOT CONFORM TO THE THAI GOVERNMENT'S ORIGINAL SCENARIO FOR RAPPROCHEMENT WITH PEKING. THE ASSEMBLY HAS HANDED THE CABINET A POLICY DEFEAT. FURTHERMORE, THE CONSERVATIVE FORCES IN PARLIAMENT HAVE SET BANGKOK-PEKING RELATIONS BACK TO BASE ONE. THE GOVERNMENT HOPED THAT THE ASSEMBLY WOULD REPEAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY DECREE 53 BEFORE A THAI DELEGATION, WHICH DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMERCE PRASONG SUKHUM HEADS, LEAVES FOR PEKING AND PYONGYAND DECEMBER 6. WHILE THE NLA MAY STILL MAKE THAT DEADLINE, THE PASSAGE OF THE STATE OPERATED TRADING BILL SHOULD NOT PLEASE THE CHINESE BECAUSE IT COMPLICATES SINO-THAI TRADE. IN THE PROCESS, THE NLA HAS ALSO HAMPERED BUDDING THAI TRADE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE (BANGKOK A-300).
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